

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 360
INFO USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3889

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, NATO, SP
SUBJECT: SPAIN AND NATO

1. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
FOR EUROPEAN AND ATLANTIC AFFAIRS, ANTONIO ELIAS MARTINENA, HAS GIVEN
THE DCM THE FOLLOWING ON THE CURRENT SPANISH POSITION WITH
RESPECT TO NATO IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION. THE DCM NOTED
THAT THERE SEEMED TO BE SOME CHANGE IN THE POSITION THAT
SPAIN'S REPRESENTATIVES IN THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COORDINA-
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TION WITH NATO WERE TAKING. THEY SEEMED TO BE PLACING
LESS EMPHASIS ON BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH NATO COUNTRIES
AND MORE EMPHASIS ON CONTACTS WITH AND INCREASED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT
NATO STRUCTURES.

2. ELIAS SAID THAT THIS WAS INDEED THE CASE. HIS EXPLANA-
TION WAS THAT THE CHANGED POLITICAL SITUATION IN SPAIN, WITH

SPAIN MOVING TOWARD DEMOCRACY, MEANT THAT SPAIN DID NOT NOW HAVE TO GO TO THE LENGTHS TO HAVE CONTACTS WITH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES OR WITH EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS THAT IT HAD UNDER THE FRANCO REGIME. MOREOVER, IN THE NEW POLITICAL CONTEXT IT WAS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR SPAIN TO APPEAR TO BE THE ONLY PARTY INTERESTED. THE QUESTION OF NATO MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A MATTER OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND IT WAS TIME FOR EUROPEAN NATO MEMBERS TO REDRESS THE BALANCE BY EXPRESSING THEIR INTEREST RATHER THAN BEING STAND-OFFISH. THE WHOLE PROCESS WOULD BE GREATLY HELPED IF THERE WERE TO BE AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST BY THE EUROPEAN NATO COUNTRIES OR BY NATO AS AN INSTITUTION AFTER THE FORTHCOMING SPANISH ELECTIONS. FINALLY, THE SPANISH EXECUTIVE WOULD SOON HAVE TO BE ACCOUNTABLE TO A POPULARLY ELECTED LEGISLATURE AND MUST HAVE A VERY CLEAR IDEA OF THE BALANCE OF PLUSSES AND MINUSES WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE SPANISH MEMBERSHIP. IN THIS CONNECTION, WITH THE QUESTION OF MEMBERSHIP NOW NEARER TO BEING A REAL ISSUE, THE GOVERNMENT NEEDED TO HAVE MUCH MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT NATO THAN IT HAD BEFORE.

3. THE DCM COMMENTED THAT IF BOTH SIDES REALLY WERE CONVINCED THAT IT WAS IN THEIR MUTUAL INTEREST THAT SPAIN BECOME A MEMBER, THEN DIPLOMATIC POSTURING OVER WHO TOOK THE FIRST STEP SHOULD NOT BE A MAJOR CONSIDERATION. IN THE CASE OF SPAIN, WE KNEW THAT THERE WERE DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS BUT IT WOULD SEEM LOGICAL THAT THOSE IN SPAIN WHO ALREADY HAD MADE UP THEIR MIND THAT NATO MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE TO SPAIN'S BENEFIT SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON PRACTICAL STEPS THAT WOULD HAVE INFLUENCE FOR A POSITIVE

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TIVE DECISION RATHER THAN ON DIPLOMATIC WINDOW-DRESSING. ELIAS SEEMED (AT LEAST) TO ACCEPT THIS POINT (ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT SURE WHAT HIS REAL VIEWS ON NATO ARE). STABLER

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